



Members of the newly created joint city and county ethics board were sworn to duty last week by Crittenden County Judge-Executive Perry Newcom. Taking the oath are (from left) Susan Yarbrough, Dan Wood and Mickey Alexander.

# Ethics board sworn to duty

STAFF REPORT

Marion-Crittenden County Code of Ethics Board held its first organizational meeting Sept. 9, laying out deadlines, reviewing disclosure forms and setting its 2025-26 calendar.

The joint city-county board was created this year after both governments adopted a consolidated ethics code to meet state law requirements. Kentucky's General Assembly in 1994 mandated that every local government establish a code of ethics, and recent amendments to KRS 65.003 reaffirmed those rules.

Board members are former mayor Mickey Alexander, chosen by the City of Marion, Susan Yarbrough, also representing the city, and Dan Wood, selected by Crittenden Fiscal Court. Wood is a former magistrate. At last week's meeting, Alexander was elected chair and Wood vice chair.

County Clerk Daryl Tabor, designated as the board's administrative officer, outlined filing requirements for candidates and officeholders and their spouses and dependents. The new financial

disclosure form requires reporting of income sources exceeding \$25,000, business interests worth more than \$50,000, real property other than a primary residence valued at \$50,000 or more, gifts of more than \$1,000 outside the immediate family, and creditors owed more than \$50,000 other than a primary home or personal vehicle.

Candidates for next year's elections will be the first to file under the new ordinances. Deadline is Jan. 9 for those seeking partisan offices, June 3 for nonpartisan races, and Aug. 25 for write-ins. Elected officials and certain appointed officials must file annually at the first of each calendar year. The board approved meeting dates following each of those deadlines to review compliance.

Tabor noted that the forms, once submitted, are public records under the Open Records Act. Some elected officials have been filing similar disclosures in past years, but now all reporting will be handled jointly by the new board.


Board members discussed the scope of enforcement and how much oversight is expected.

Yarbrough asked who would verify assets such as stocks. County Attorney Bart Frazer, who was advising on the ordinance, said filings are primarily "pro forma" and the board's role is to hear complaints, not to investigate or validate every report.

Failure to file, or filing incomplete or false information, carries penalties. Civil fines are set at \$25 per day up to \$500, and intentional omissions can rise to misdemeanor charges.

Frazer reminded the board that the ethics reforms stemmed from scandals of the early 1990s, notably Operation Boprot, which led lawmakers to impose tougher standards on local governments.

The board approved its 2025-26 calendar, but members acknowledged they may not meet often in years with no elections. Special meetings can be called by the chair if a complaint is filed. Complaints are to be submitted at the County Clerk's office, which also maintains disclosure records for public inspection.



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Workers Cody Grant and BJ Tosh earlier this week were pulling off a crippled appendage on the front of what was most recently Coach's Cleaners on East Carlisle Street in Marion. Plans are to renovate the building, which could be home to a new restaurant, Airbnb and other businesses.

# New development on Carlisle St. will revive one-time post office

STAFF REPORT

The wrecking ball has been swinging on historic Carlisle Street this week, clearing the way for a new chapter in one of Marion's oldest business blocks.

Local developer and business owner Todd Riley purchased the Blue-Nunn Building, better known in recent decades as Coach's Cleaners, last November through his company, Drake Rentals. The property has stood for more than a century, first serving as Marion's post office from 1905 until 1918.

Riley said plans are in the works that could bring a restaurant to the space by the end of the year. Other possibilities include apartments, a venue area and several Airbnb units upstairs. The second floor has already been gutted and could accommodate four short-term rentals totaling about 3,600 square feet.

The renovation design calls for New Orleans-style balconies front and back of the building with wrought iron railing and historic details to complement its original architecture. Riley said he envisions a "cool look" that will honor the past while creating new opportunities. A gated alleyway beside the building will also become part of the project, providing a private outdoor sitting area.

"I think there will be a tenant in here by the end of the year," Riley said, noting that interest has grown since cleanup began.

The building's history is tightly bound to Marion's growth in the early 1900s. Following a devastating fire in March 1905, Carlisle Street, which was then known as Bank Street, was rebuilt with new brick structures that gave rise to the "Busy Bee Block," a nickname for the flurry of commerce that sprang up. The Blue-Nunn Building was among those projects, and by the fall of 1905 it opened as the town's new post office.

“By 1912, the facility was already too small to handle the community’s growing mail volume,” wrote historian Brenda Underdown in one of her articles a few years ago. Crittenden County native Sen. Ollie M. James pushed for a larger federal building, and in 1917 bids were opened for construction of the new post office at Carlisle and College streets, which is also currently undergoing some minor renovations.

In its early years, the 1905 post office also housed business suites upstairs, just as it may again. Today, Riley hopes its second century will be marked by renewed life as a hub for dining, lodging and entertainment.

# Cole Springs officially changes to city precinct

STAFF REPORT

Cole Springs housing complex, annexed into Marion last year to receive city services, has now been added officially to a city voting precinct.

Crittenden County Board of Elections held a special meeting last week to shift the development, which straddles McMichigan Road, from a county precinct into one of the city's. The move affects only precinct boundaries on the map and does not change representation in any district. Cole Springs remains in Magisterial

District 6, represented by Scott Belt, and in Crittenden County School Board District 5, represented by Ryan McDaniel.

The change places Cole Springs voters in Precinct SE2, where ballots are cast at Crittenden County Office Complex.

Cole Springs has 42 residential units and could eventually generate 100 or more voters, according to Crittenden County Clerk Daryl Tabor.

dents of the housing complex have filed formal change-of-address notices with the clerk's office. Election officials plan to mail reminders instructing all Cole Springs residents to update their voter registration and motor vehicle records before the end of the year.

The county election board is made up of Tabor, Sheriff Evan Head, and two members appointed by local Republican and Democratic parties.

# ATTENTION

The City of Fredonia recently passed Ordinance NO. 07-21-2025 regulating potable water sales that are transported outside of the boundaries of the Fredonia Water System for the purpose of being potable water. This ordinance is to regulate water being purchased and transported out of the City of Fredonia for ingestion or consumption purposes only. If you are purchasing water for agriculture or livestock reasons, then this does not apply to you as a vendor. This ordinance establishes new regulations on water that are being bought, loaded into tanks for transport, and consumed outside of the Fredonia Water System services.

The new regulations for potable water are simple and a visit to Fredonia City Hall will have you ready for your potable water needs. First you will need to obtain a Potable Water Drinking License that will need to be purchased and renewed annually. The tank that will be hauling water will need to be registered and inspected annually to registration date. Water loads can be purchased during normal business hours and \$0.05 charge per gallon purchased will be due at City Hall per load. This can be paid cash or check, payable to the Fredonia Water System.

This ordinance is to protect Fredonia Water System from any damage or hardship that may occur during a water emergency outside of our water system. In past instances, there were over \$70,000 in damage to our water system due to other water systems emergencies. During this time, we did seek help and advisement from Frankfort and that request was neglected. That neglect tells me that we were on our own.

Just a reminder to all, that storing potable water in large plastic tanks is not safe and the chlorine will burn off rapidly. The Fredonia Water System is not responsible for water once it leaves the tap. The full text of the ordinance is available to the public during regular business hours at Fredonia City Hall located at 312 Cassidy Ave., Fredonia, KY. 42411